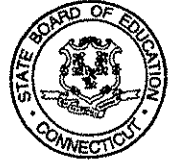




STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Public Health Committee
February 6, 2009

TESTIMONY OF
MARK K. MCQUILLAN, COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION

ON

RAISED BILL 755

AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE OF ASTHMATIC INHALERS AND
EPINEPHRINE AUTO-INJECTORS WHILE AT SCHOOL

The Department of Education does not support the adoption of Raised Bill 755, which proposes to permit children diagnosed with either asthma or an allergic condition to retain possession of asthmatic inhalers and automatic prefilled cartridge injectors at all times while attending school, based only on a written certification from specified licensed health care practitioners.

The Department does not support this bill for a number of reasons. Self-administration of medications by students is currently allowed if approved by the local or regional board of education, under conditions set forth in regulations adopted by the State Board of Education (Section 10-212a-4 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies). The regulations require that, among other things, the school nurse has evaluated the student and the school setting and deemed it to be safe and appropriate for the student to self-administer the medication. The changes proposed in this bill, to allow self-administration based

Finally, the Department opposes the proposed change to Subsection (b) of Section 10-206 of the General Statutes in Section 3 of this bill as it is not beneficial to the issue of self-medication by students. The health assessment form described in the statute amended in the bill is only required prior to school enrollment (e.g., upon entry into kindergarten). Generally, a student's needs for asthma and severe allergic conditions change on a yearly basis and information about those needs would have to be submitted more frequently.

In light of the above, the Department of Education believes the changes proposed in this bill are unnecessary as the issue of self-administration of medications by students is already adequately provided for in current statutes and regulations and the proposed changes in this bill would in fact undermine the current processes in place that provide for the safe self-administration of medications. The Department of Education does not support this bill.